[Translation]

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (Patiala) : The following item may be included in the next week's agenda :

"Discussion on the unfreasible wheat procurement policy."

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Shimla) : The following items of public importance may be included in the next week's agenda :

1. To make announcement of some package programme and financial assistance for Himachal Pradesh for the developmental works of the State, as it has been done in the cases of other States.
2. To take action on the demands raised by the M.Ps. from Himachal Pradesh to finalise a scheme for laying of rail lines in Himachal Pradesh.

[English]

SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : The following items may be included in the next week's agenda :

1. Expedite the process for setting up of the All India Radio station at Asansol.
2. Take steps to enable subscribers of Barakar/ Chittaranjan getting access to contact the subscribers of Panaragh by local dialing system instead of STD.

[Translation]

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur) : The following items may be included in the next week's agenda :

1. To take steps to seek co-operation of voluntary organisations in making Bihar self-reliant in the production of quality seeds.
2. To construct a bridge over Road No. 99 at Virouli Ghat of the river Burhi Gandak in Bihar, as it will reduce the distance between Darbhanga and Patna to 50 km. and benefit nearly 3 lakh people.

12.09 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Price Policy on Fertilizers

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : Mr. Speak, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make the following statement :

The price, distribution and movement on phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers were decontrolled with effect from 25th August, 1992. This resulted in steep hike in the prices of these fertilizers. In order of cushion this price hike, Government of India is implementing a scheme of concession on sale of these decontrolled fertilizers to the farmers. This scheme was initially implemented in Rabi 1992-93 (w.e.f. 1.10.92) and is being continued since then.

Urea is the only fertilizer which is under Statutory Price Control and sold at a uniform price of Rs. 3,320/- per tonne all across the country. The decontrol of P&K fertilizers resulted in decline in their consumption whereas in respect of Urea the growth in consumption has been maintained and consequent imbalance in the use of fertilizers. The NPK ratio which stood at 5.9:2.4:1 during 1991-92 widened to 8.5:2.5:1 during 1995-96.

The Government of India announced a substantial increase in concession on P&K fertilizers with effect from 6th July, 1996 as a first step towards improving the deteriorating NPK ratio. The rate of concession on indigenous Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) was raised from Rs. 1,000/ per tonne to Rs. 3,000/- per tonne. A concession to the extent of Rs. 1,500/- per tonne was extended to imported DAP also to bring its selling price at par with indigenous DAP. Similarly the concession on Muriate of Potash (MOP) was increased from Rs. 1,000/- per tonne to Rs. 1,500/- per tonne. The rate of concession on Single Super Phosphate (SSP) was also enhanced from Rs. 340/- to Rs. 500/- per tonne. The rates of concession on Complexes were increased proportionately.

To reduce the existing imbalance in the application of NPK nutrients, it has been decided to further increase the concessions on phosphatic and potassic fertilizers during 1997-98 and the incremental requirements of funds will be met by increasing the price of Urea by 10 per cent. As a result, the increase in concession for DAP will be Rs. 750/- per tonne, Rs. 100/- for S.S.P. and Rs. 500/- for M.O.P. and proportionate increases in respect of other Complexes.

The revised concessions will be applicable from April 1, 1997 and the increase in price of Urea with effect from February 21, 1997.

Certain other measures are being considered with a view to promoting consumption of fertilizers in low-consumption areas. It has been decided to subsidise transporation of decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers to parts of Jammu and Kashmir, North-Eastern States etc.

It is expected that these measures will go some way in promoting increased use of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers along with consumption of urea and bring the NPK ratio closer to the optimum level. Thank you.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now let us take up rice-Milling Industry (Regulation) Repeal Bill, 1996.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : Sir, we have given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER : Notice for what ?